

# MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes ☐  
no ☒

Property Name: E. O. Bowen and Brother Garage Inventory Number: CT-767  
 Address: 4001-4009 Old Town Road City: Huntingtown Zip Code: 20639  
 County: Calvert USGS Topographic Map: Prince Frederick  
 Owner: Huntingtown Medical Center, LLC Is the property being evaluated a district? ☐ yes  
 Tax Parcel Number: 156 Tax Map Number: 18 Tax Account ID Number: 02 001128  
 Project: Huntingtown Professional Building Agency: SHA, Tracking No. 07-AP-CA-002  
 Site visit by MHT Staff: ☒ no ☐ yes Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Is the property located within a historic district? ☒ yes ☐ no

*If the property is within a district*

CT-  
District Inventory Number: 1278

Town of Huntingtown (recommended "Not

NR-listed district ☐ yes Eligible district ☐ yes

District Name: NR eligible, 2001)

Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource ☐ yes ☐ no Non-contributing but eligible in another context ☐

*If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)*

Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible ☐ yes ☐ no

Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

## Description

The former E. O. Bowen and Brother Garage is located on a roughly 1 acre of parcel of land, in the historic section of the town of Huntingtown. The building, which now houses a bank and an antiques store, fronts the east side of Old Town Road (Rt. 534), near the intersection with Huntingtown Road (Rt. 521). The area north and south of the building is dedicated to parking. A sizable stand of trees grow in back.

The subject building is composed of two parts. The original c. 1926 section is a 1 1/2-story, 3-bay, frame, gable-front, rectangular utilitarian structure that measures 45 ft. (l) x 50 (w). The walls are sheathed in 4 ft.-wide, pressed-sheet-metal panels, designed to imitate rusticated concrete block or stone. The panels are attached directly to the studs without an intermediate substrate. A low, poured concrete slab serves as the foundation. The low-pitched roof has wide, overhanging boxed eaves. In the absence of downspouts, the wide overhang is necessary to direct rain water away from the metal walls.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended ☐ Eligibility not recommended ☒

Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ None

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

*[Signature]*  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

3/27/2013

Date

*[Signature]*  
Reviewer, NR Program

3/28/13

Date

201301273

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
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A 20 ft. x 12 ft. hipped-roof canopy with exposed rafter ends projects from the building's front, northwest corner. The metal support posts and concrete pads are replacements, but the canopy is original. The roof is covered with somewhat deteriorated pressed-metal, fish-scale shingles. The canopy, which originally provided shelter to the now-removed gasoline pumps, now protects the bank's drive-thru window.

With respect to fenestration, most window and door openings appear original, but without exception the spaces are fitted replacement units. The two automotive entrances are paired, glazed-and-wooden, sliding track doors. These were reportedly installed in the 1960s. The south- and east-side, metal-and-glass pedestrian entrances are of a more recent vintage. Except for the drive-thru bank teller window, and one, horizontal, 2/2 window adjacent to the south-side pedestrian door, remaining windows are 6/6 units that were installed c. 1984.

The building's second section is square-shaped, flat-roofed (with parapet), and built out of concrete blocks. It extends from the north side of the original structure. According to Robert Bowen, the nephew of the original owners, this section was constructed in the late 50s or early 60s to accommodate a hydraulic automotive lift. This part of the building, in particular, underwent major exterior and interior renovation c. 1984 when the addition, and part of the main building, was adapted for use as a branch of the Prince George's Federal Savings Bank.<sup>1</sup>

The interior of both sections is almost entirely finished with modern materials. These modifications also date to c. 1984. The exception is the second floor of the original structure, which is unfinished and remains in its original c. 1926 state. The framing system is well built and is reminiscent of construction methods used in tobacco barns of the period. This similarity is not surprising given the building's size and rural Calvert County location. Unfortunately, nothing is known about the builder.

### **Integrity**

The former E. O. Bowen and Brother Garage retains its overall form, and is in very good structural condition. While the wide automotive doors and overhanging canopy communicate the building's original purpose, the replacement 6/6 windows, Colonial Revival treatment of the addition, insertion of a drive-thru window and ATM, and removal of the gasoline pumps adversely impact the building's integrity. Particularly affected aspects of integrity are design, materials and feeling.

### **History**

In 1926 Elmer O. Bowen (1884-1952) and his brother Allen S. Bowen (c. 1894-1970) acquired the 1 acre subject property and had built a garage and gasoline filling station. In 1936, Allen Bowen and his wife purchased the adjacent 10 acre property. The garage and Esso (later Exxon) filling station operated until 1964. According to the brother's nephew Robert Bowen, in addition to offering fuel and repair service, the brothers had one of the largest inventories of automotive parts in the area. In 1936, Allen Bowen and his wife purchased the adjacent 10 acre property. Anna May Bowen (c. 1895- 1984) became sole owner of both properties following the death of her brother-in-law and husband. She sold both properties together, shortly before her death in 1984.<sup>2</sup>

The establishment of the E. O. Bowen and Brother Garage is associated with a period of physical and economic expansion in the town of Huntingtown. Map evidence indicates that the small crossroad village more than tripled in size during the first few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> Accessible by neither water nor rail, the 19<sup>th</sup>-century postal village served the needs of the immediate population. In 1910 Huntingtown consisted of little more than a Methodist Church, store/post office and a few surrounding farms. By 1938 dozens of buildings were clustered near the intersection of present-day Old Town Road and Huntingtown Road. The town continued to grow into the 1950s.

The growth of Huntingtown during the first half of the 20th century occurred in direct response to the rise of the automobile as the principal form of transportation, and Huntingtown's location along, what was then, Solomon's Island Road (Rt. 2).

<sup>1</sup> Bowen, Robert. Interview by Sherri Marsh Johns. At Bowen's Grocery Store, March 11, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Land Records of Calvert County, Liber ABE 318, Folio 323 (1984).

<sup>3</sup> Present day Huntingtown is not to be confused with the nearby Colonial era town of the same name that was destroyed by the British in 1814.

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Solomon's Island Road, both in its former and current alignment, served as the principal north-south corridor through Calvert County. This period also saw the establishment of a variety of other business and civic buildings in Huntingtown. In addition to the E.O. Bowen and Brother Garage, other pre-World War II concerns include Lyons and Gibson Lumber, Bowen Grocery, Huntingtown School, Huntington United Methodist Church, as well as a dozen or so dwellings. A 2001 survey found that thirty-four (67%) of Huntingtown's fifty-one buildings were constructed prior to 1951.<sup>4</sup>

As a former gasoline filling station and automobile repair facility, the subject property was inarguably built in response to the booming demand for gasoline and automotive services. It is an example of a 1920s "drive-in filling station." Prior to that time oil companies regularly distributed their motor fuel by the road side of existing grocery stores, blacksmith shops and other established businesses. Lines of cars blocked traffic, while pumps located so close to passing cars posed an obvious safety concern. By the 1920s municipal officials throughout the country sought to ban the practice of curbside gasoline sales.<sup>5</sup>

By that time oil companies were experimenting with purpose-built facilities. By the end of the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the first examples of what would become one of the most prolific commercial building types—the gasoline station—were in operation. Unlike curbside pumps, new drive-in filling stations allowed the motorist to safely pull off the road. The sale of gasoline and automobile repair were a perfect match. Stand alone fueling stations and filling station/ garage combinations were built by the thousands. Their appearance came on so suddenly and in such numbers that their appearance became a concern.<sup>6</sup>

Many of these early facilities were little more than shacks and sheds. These "ugly" buildings soon drew complaints. In urban areas where zoning and public pressure were issues, a series of "artistic" and "City Beautiful" stations appeared. In addition, oil companies, increasingly conscious of their public image, responded with standards, and eventually standardized prefabricated buildings for vendors distributing their brand of fuel. Site-specific, operator-built facilities continued to be erected, but these more modest structures were more common in rural locations.<sup>7</sup>

The E. O. Bowen and Brother building, though better than a shack or shed, certainly falls short of City Beautiful ideals; except perhaps, by being painted white. Functionality, economy and practicality were the builder's guiding design philosophy. The frame is well very well built, and designed to withstand heavy wind, but little or no thought went into needless ornamentation. The pressed sheet metal siding was inexpensive, easy to install, fire-resistant, durable if well-maintained, and easily replaceable if damaged. For these reasons sheet metal was a popular choice for industrial buildings, especially structures where the danger of fire was of particular concern.<sup>8,9</sup>

Elmer Bowen died in 1952. His brother Allen operated the business until 1964. Allen's widow inherited the garage after her husband's death in 1970. The building was used as an antiques store from c. 1964 to c. 1984.<sup>10</sup> In 1984 part of the building was readapted for use as a bank. The remainder continued to be used as an antiques shop.

#### **National Register Eligibility**

The E. O. Bowen and Brother Garage is a fairly intact example of a 1920s drive-in filling station and garage. However, its level of significance, even at the local level, does not appear sufficient to warrant listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Schuman. *Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form, Town of Huntingtown, CT-1278* (2001).

<sup>5</sup> Chester H. Liebs. *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 96-100.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Betsy Hunter Bradley. *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 142.

<sup>9</sup> Frank Lloyd Wright failed to see the benefits of galvanized sheet iron. And when pressed to imitate stone, it was, in his lofty opinion, a "sham material." In 1928 he wrote "There never was a more inferior building material than old concrete block unless it was galvanized sheet iron..." Quoted in Ada Louise Huxtable's *Concrete Technology in USA: Historical Survey.*

<sup>10</sup> Bowen Interview.

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**Criterion A (Events):** The E. O. Bowen and Brother Garage is associated with the building boom that took place in Huntingtown in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Huntingtown's growth during this period is a small town, rural example, which shows in microcosm how, in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the popularity of the automobile spurred massive development. This very important trend occurred throughout the country and in population centers of all sizes. The impact of the automobile on the American landscape cannot be overstated.<sup>11</sup> The nexus between this cultural phenomenon, Huntingtown and the Bowens is illustrated through this building.

However, with respect to this trend, the subject property should be looked at in the context of Huntingtown as a whole, not as an individual property in isolation. The Town of Huntingtown was evaluated in 2001 and recommended as "Not Eligible" due to integrity issues. Individually this building's historical significance does not rise to the level of National Register eligibility.

**Criterion B: (Person):** This property is not associated with the lives of persons important in our past. The Bowen name is well known in southern Maryland and Calvert County in particular. Their presence in Calvert County goes back to at least the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup> Various members of this large family have achieved success in business, and held local public office. Elmer and Allen Bowen were both active and well-regarded in the community, and operated a successful business, but their individual accomplishments lack lasting historical importance.

**Criterion C: (Design/Construction):** The building's appearance indicates it was constructed by local builders. As such, it is a vernacular interpretation of what a building of this type should be. It is not based on a corporate design or built from prefabricated parts. While the automotive doors and fuel canopy identify this structure as a garage and gasoline station, its form, in part due to alterations, does not sufficiently embody the distinctive characteristics necessary to meet this National Register criterion. Furthermore, it does not represent the work of a master of possess high artistic value.

**Criterion D: (Information Potential):** This building is unlikely to yield important historical information.

<sup>11</sup> Chester H. Liebs. *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 21-23.

<sup>12</sup> Ancestry.com, "Lackey's-Harkelroads," <http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/93665/family/familygroup?fpid=772785395>.

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Figure 1: 1910 USGS Map, Prince Frederick quad excerpt. No building is indicated in the location of the E. O Bowen Garage.



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CT - 1767

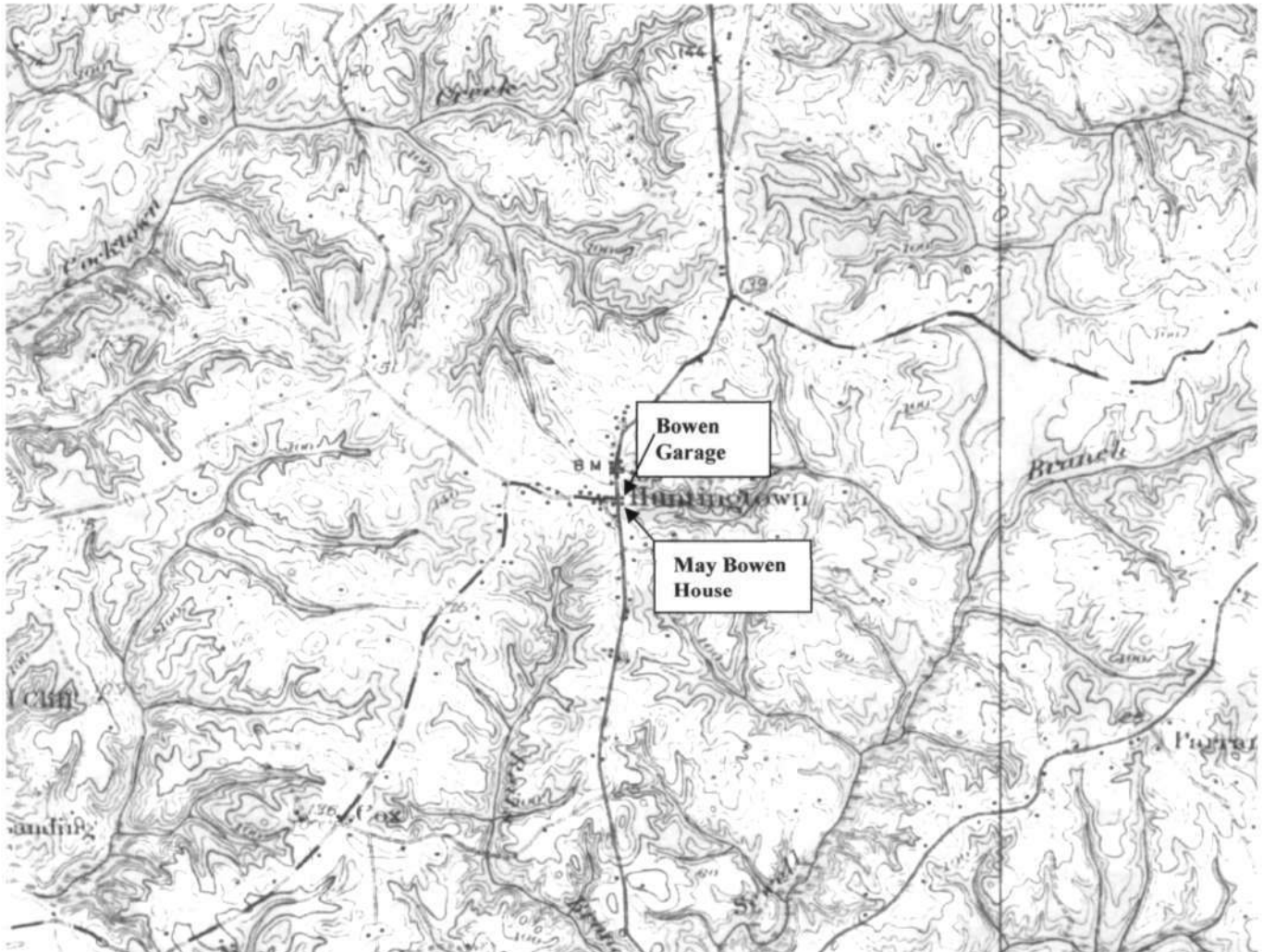


Figure 2: 1938 USGS Map, Prince Frederick Quad Excerpt. Note how by this year the town's building density had moved east towards old Solomon's Island Road.

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Continuation Sheet No. 6

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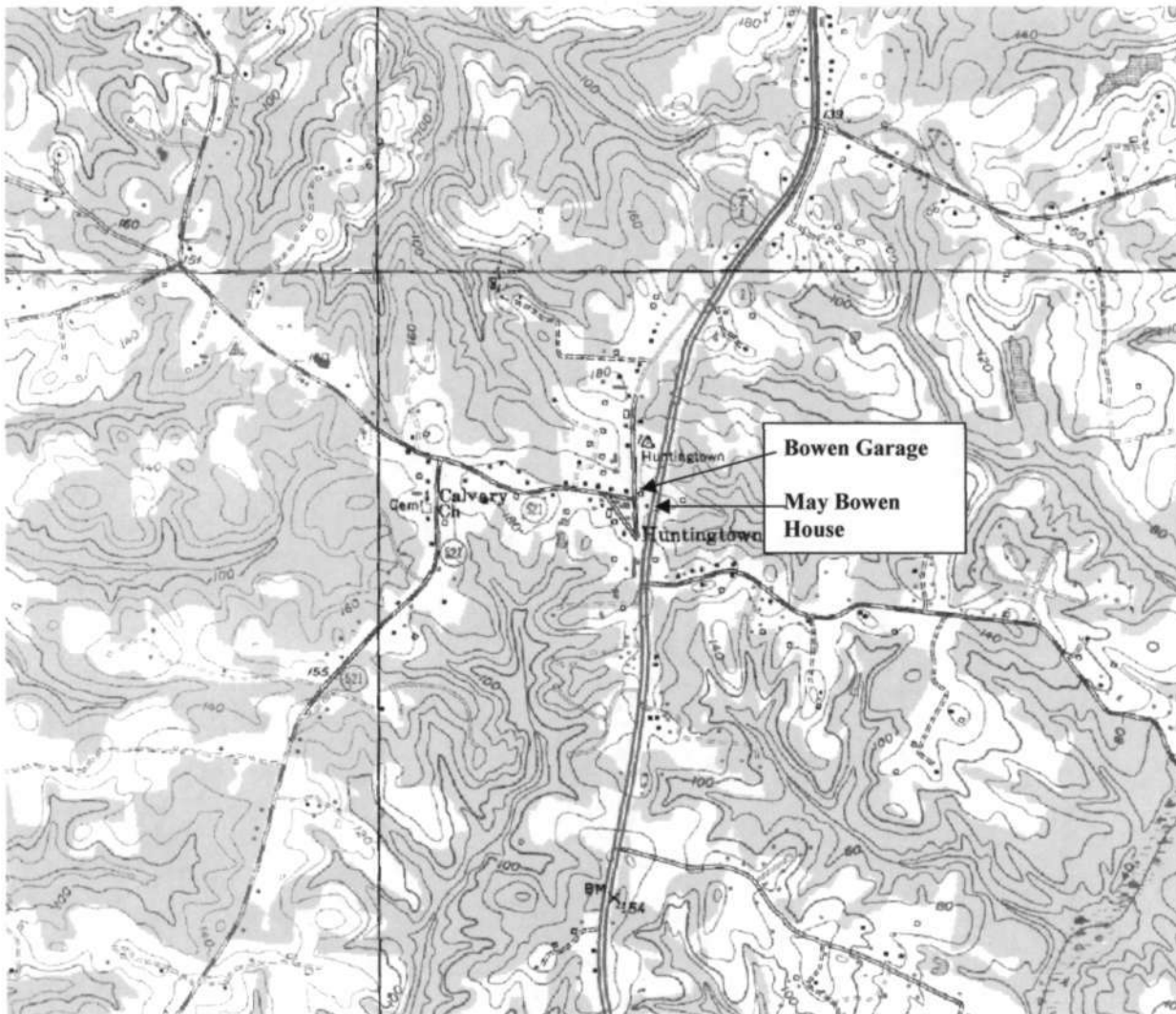


Figure 3: This current USGS map viewed on Trails.com shows the realignment of Solomon's Island Road.

Prepared by: Sherri Marsh Johns  
Retrospect, LLC

March 19,  
Date Prepared: 2013

Prince George's  
Federal  
Savings Bank

INC. 1936 INCORPORATED 1937

THIS is THAT  
TREASURES  
HOMES CAPTIVE COLLECTIBLES





Digital MASTER at MHT

Photo 1 of 3



CT-767 E.O. BOWEN + BRO. GARAGE  
OLD TOWN Rd, Houghton, Calvert Co., MD  
by S. MARSH Johns  
march 2013

Digital MASTER at MHH

Rear, facing WEST

Photo 2 of 3



CT-767 E.O. Bowers + BRB's Garage  
Old Town Road, Huntingtown, Calverton, MD  
by S. MARSH Johns

MARCH 2013

Digital MASTER at MHT

ATTIC

photo 3 of 3



# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. CT-767

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Bowen Garage

and/or common Antique Center and Sign Shop

## 2. Location

street & number Old Town Road (Maryland Route 524) ☐ not for publicationcity, town Huntingtown ☐ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Calvert

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name May J. Bowen and Evelyn May Paul

street &amp; number c/o Diane Whiteside telephone no.:

city, town Fairfax state and zip code Virginia 22030

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Calvert County Courthouse liber

street &amp; number Main Street (MD 765) folio

city, town Prince Frederick state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. CT-767

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☒ unaltered  
☐ altered

### Check one

☐ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This early twentieth-century garage building faces west onto Old Town Road at its intersection with Huntingtown Road. It is oriented with its gable end toward the street. It is constructed of posts and beams with downbraces and no interior sheathing. The exterior covering, originally weatherboarding, is now sheet metal molded to look like rough-faced ashlar. The facade is dominated by a central vehicle bay with a sliding wooded matchboarded door. This bay is flanked by domestic-scale windows with six-over-six double-hung sash. An off-center pedestrian door provides access to the filling-station office. The gable roof is covered with standing-seam sheet metal, and a porte cochere for cars is created by a hipped canopy set on metal posts. There is one interior brick stove flue. There are more sliding doors for vehicle bays on the south side of the building. On the north side, there is a modern concrete hypen and garage building which houses a hydraulic lift.

## 8. Significance

Survey No.

CT-767

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates****Builder/Architect**check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D  
and/orApplicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ GLevel of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This building was built by the Bowen family as a garage in 1927. Directed historical research would more firmly establish the historical significance of this site.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. CT-767

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name Prince Frederick, MDQuadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

Zone	Easting	Northing							

B 

Zone	Easting	Northing							

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Camille Wells		
organization	MHT/Calvert Planning Department	date	September 30, 1986
street & number	Courthouse, Main Street	telephone	(301) 535-2348
city or town	Prince Frederick	state	Maryland 20678

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

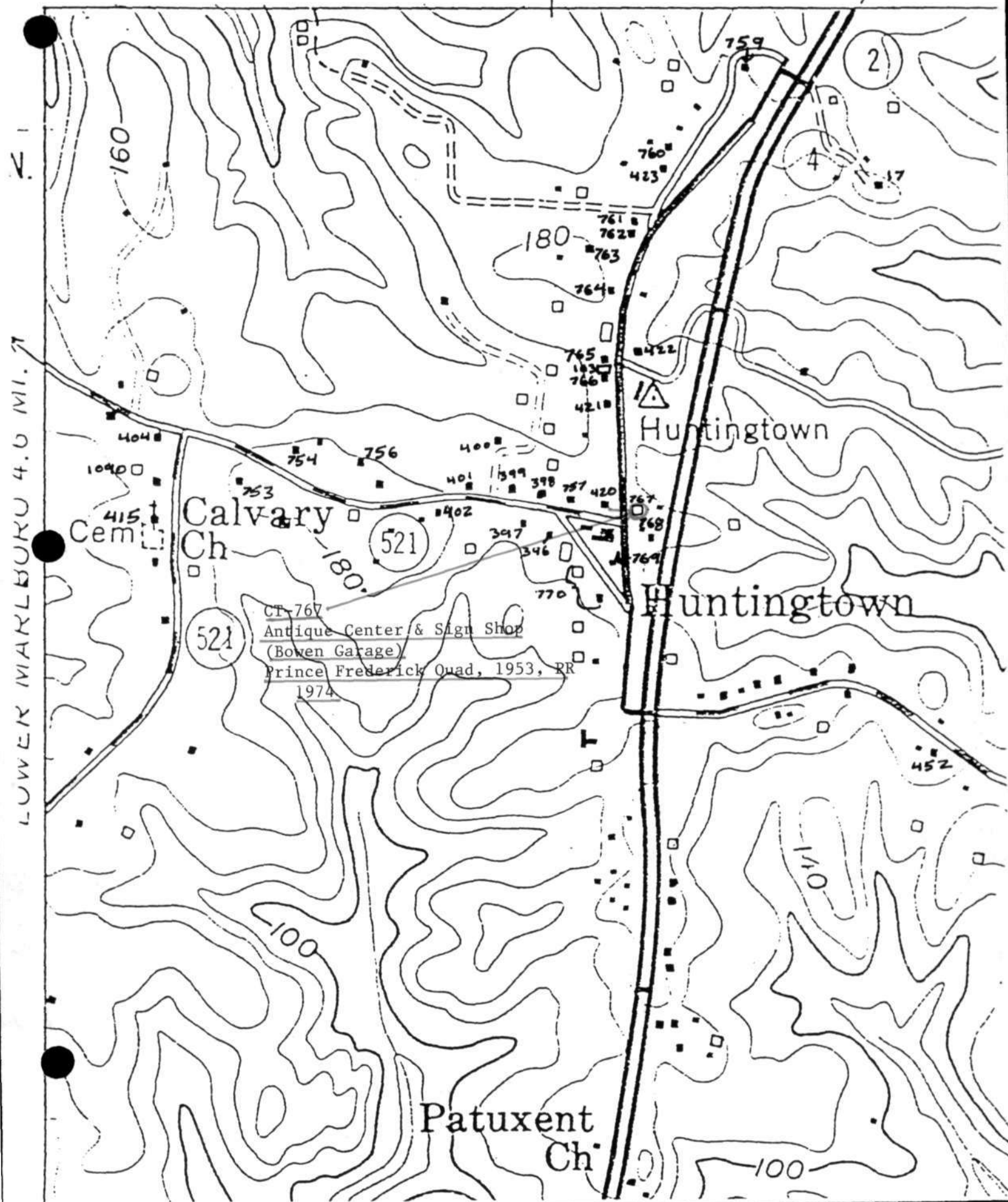
return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438



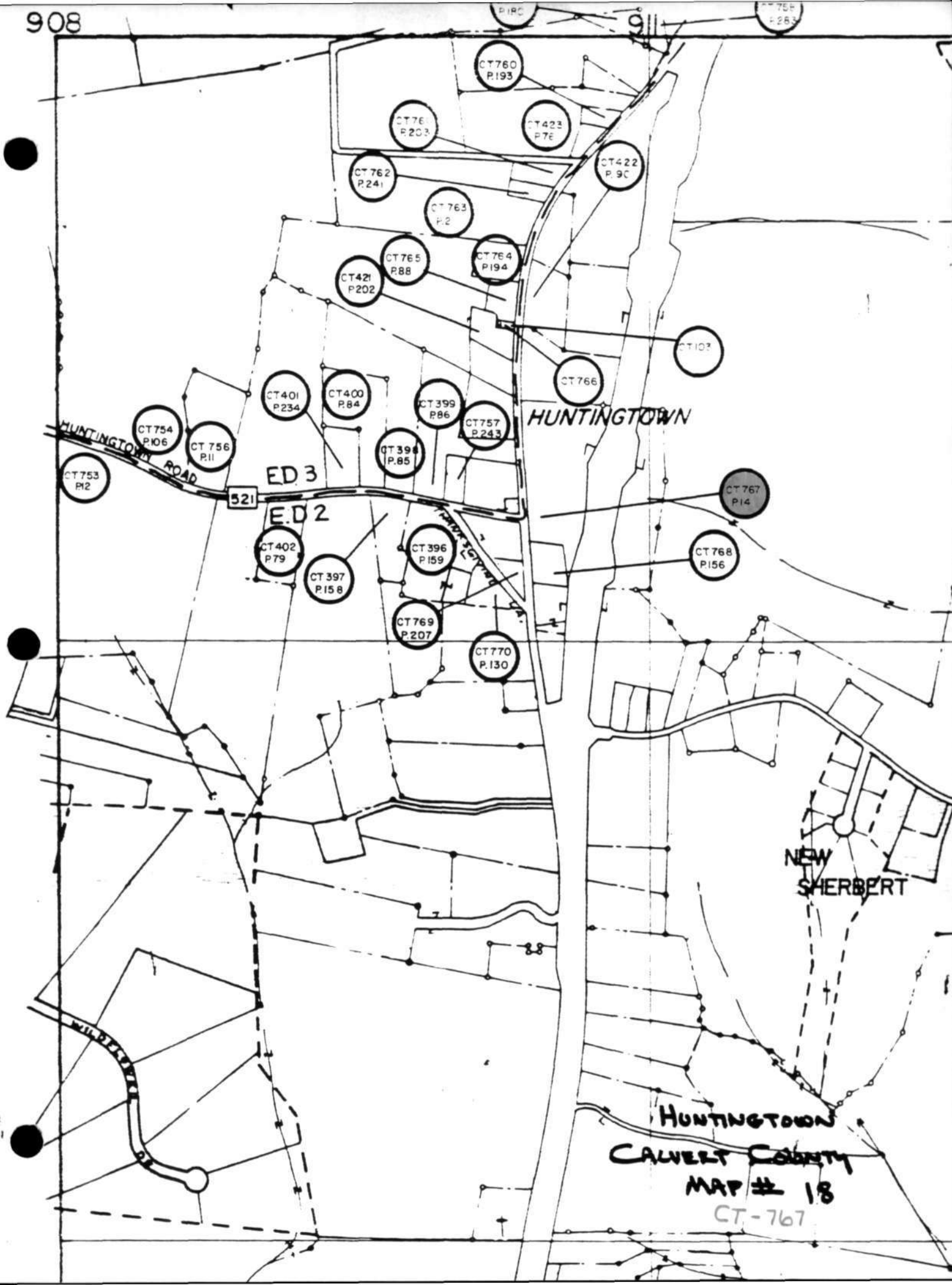
## CT-767

359000m.E.

ANNA  
SUND









Ct-767    Antique and Sign Shop  
          Old Town Road  
          Huntingtown

Camille Wells            9/86  
view from the east